

**Final Progress Report –  
VOCA/VAWA Performance Measurement Project  
Grant 2006-BJ-CX-KO33  
Bureau of Justice Statistics**

The Georgia Statistical Analysis Center (SAC) of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council was awarded Grant #2006-BJ-CX-K033 from the Bureau of Justice Statistics. This funding was used to support the SAC as it continues to fulfill the vision of quality criminal justice research, programs, and services for the State of Georgia. In spring 2006, the SAC Committee selected SJS THEME #7 for its focus for this grant. This theme focused on Performance Measurement, developing and improving performance measures and the tools available to agencies to assess progress in addressing public safety and the administration of justice goals. This is the final progress report on this project.

As the State Administrative Agency for the VOCA (Victims of Crime Act) and the STOP VAWA (Violence Against Women Act) grants, the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council distributes grants to over 200 victim assistance programs across the entire state of Georgia. The CJCC sees victim assistance programs as an integral part of the criminal justice system in Georgia, a network of governmental and non-profit community-based agencies that provide an array of services to victims of violent crime, insuring that these victims receive justice in a manner that respects their rights and human dignity and supports their recovery from the effects of victimization. At present, the Office of Victims of Crime (OVC) and the Office of Violence Against Women (OVW) in the Department of Justice require states to report output information, specifically information about the numbers and types of victims served and the services provided to victims.

With the Outcome Performance Measurement Project, the CJCC/SAC strove to attain a higher purpose and establish an outcome-based performance measurement and reporting system for all of the different types of programs providing direct services to victims receiving funding from CJCC. Through a combination of legislation, regulations, executive policy guidance and significant federal funding, the government has encouraged agencies and stakeholders in the victim assistance field to work together to deliver high-quality services to victims. However, few programs have been able to effectively measure the outcomes victims achieve as a result of receiving these services. The concept of performance measurement, including self-monitoring and evaluation for program improvement, are relatively new concepts for many victim assistance programs and agencies. But, without the ability to measure performance, establish benchmarks, and track progress, the state and its partner local agencies will never be able to fully achieve needed systems' reform and improved outcomes for victims of crime. An outcome-based performance measurement system is absolutely vital to victim service improvement. The system would assist in establishing baseline performance, identifying areas for change, and allowing service agencies and organizations to chart their progress in meeting public safety and justice related goals. To achieve long-term victim services improvement, the state must have the capacity to engage in ongoing performance measurement. And, in an era of government

accountability, the state must be able to demonstrate conclusively the value of these programs to the policy-makers and citizens of the state.

## **OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Georgia SAC began the process of building a system for collecting performance and outcome data from all of the Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) and Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) subgrantees in fall 2006. Following the initial meeting with stakeholders in December 2006, a series of meetings was held from the end of January through the end of February (January 30<sup>th</sup>, 31<sup>st</sup>, February 6, 7, 8, 13<sup>th</sup>) and in May (May 8, 9, and 24<sup>th</sup>) with participants from all of the different types of victims' assistance programs funded through these two grant programs. Performance Vistas, Inc. (PVI) and CJCC staff coordinated all training sessions with participants. The first sessions introduced the topic of performance measurement and the difference between outputs (process) and outcome measures. Participants were also introduced to the logic model concept and encouraged to develop logic models for each of their programs in order to clearly identify activities, outputs, and outcomes.

Then, groups of volunteers representing each type of program (prosecution-based victim witness assistance programs, law enforcement-based victim witness assistance programs, domestic violence shelters, sexual assault centers, child advocacy centers, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASAs), victim/survivor counseling programs, and legal advocacy programs serving elders, immigrants and refugees, and domestic violence victims) worked together to develop outcome measures for each of their respective type of programs. These measures were shared with the larger group and each program type's outcome measures were compared with those of other types. Suggested wording changes were made to develop similar items across programs wherever possible. Also discussed with the group were data collection processes and guidelines. The group agreed to the recommendations and these were distributed to all subgrantees along with the identified outcome measures. Copies of these are attached to this report.

At the Annual Victims' Conference, VOCA and VAWA subgrantees were informed that they would be required to collect outcome data from their clients using the performance measurement system under development. Each agency is expected to collect its own client outcome data using their client survey on an on-going basis. Each agency then will compile the data from clients served and report the outcome data in summary form twice a year. PVI is developing a web-based Access application that subgrantees will use to report summary data on their outcome measures.

A three month pilot was scheduled from June 1<sup>st</sup> through August 31<sup>st</sup> to allow agencies to develop and test their client survey instruments and data collection procedures. Subgrantees were told to begin collecting data at any point during this period. Using a survey distributed to all VOCA and VAWA subgrantees, CJCC is exploring the current use of automated case management and client record keeping by subgrantees to determine whether CJCC needs to support the acquisition of automated systems or

develop an independent Access-based application for subgrantees to use to collect individual level client data.

Based on requests received from subgrantees, PVI and CJCC conducted another series of trainings on the performance measurement system in late August. PVI also analyzed the initial data collected by subgrantees from victims. PVI and CJCC/SAC staff worked together to develop and revise a Data Collection Guidelines Manual and tweak all of the questionnaires to be used for data collection based on feedback from the subgrantees.

In addition, PVI developed Excel spreadsheets for all programs to use to compile data collected from individual clients into aggregate data to be reported to CJCC. PVI has also developed on-line forms to be used by sub-grantees to report their data. Outcome data will be reported twice a year, once at six months and again at the end of twelve months. Copies of all of the forms developed for use by subgrantees, the Data Collection Guidelines, and the Instructions for the Spreadsheets are attached to this report.

During the course of the training in August, CJCC received an urgent request from our prosecution-based victim witness assistance programs to meet with them to discuss the project and their concerns. Reviewing the lists of all participants, CJCC staff and PVI realized that many VWAP staff had not taken part in the earlier planning sessions and were presented with a "fait accompli" in August that many did not understand or feel comfortable putting into practice. Indeed, this project has been a learning process not just for our subgrantees but also for CJCC/SAC staff in terms of the complexities and differences among our subgrantees. As a result of a meeting with the VWAPS in October, 2007, CJCC and PVI scheduled another round of trainings, focusing on logic models, performance measurement, and data collection issues. These trainings were held around the state during the first week of December. Based on the results of these trainings and the agreement of the VWAPs to changes in the questionnaires and the data collection guidelines based on their recommendations, the Performance Measurement Project, at least the first phase, has been successfully completed effective January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2008.

The other victim assistance programs who had greater familiarity with logic models and the entire concept of program evaluation, performance measurement, and data collection, have been collecting outcome data from clients since October 1, 2007. All of the VWAPs will begin data collection (some have already) by the end of January. The first outcome performance data reports are due in April. We anticipate making some additional changes as needed based on this completed comprehensive field trial. We have adhered to a participatory evaluation approach that respects and honors the experience of our subgrantees in serving victims while also building evaluation capacity within these organizations. Although the process took longer than originally planned, and required the extension of the contract with PVI using VOCA administrative funds, we have built a system that almost all of our subgrantees understands, supports, and is using. We have also had informal reports from subgrantees that the collection of

outcome data from their clients has already led to programmatic changes and improvements, as well as greater appreciation from staff that their work makes a real difference in victims' lives.

One of our VAWA subgrantees, Catholic Social Services, volunteered to translate the client outcome surveys into Spanish. We have received their translations and are reviewing them before sending them out to subgrantees to use.

The VOCA and VAWA applications will be revised to reflect our emphasis on logic models, clear program design, and an expectation that programs providing services to victims of crime are accountable for the outcomes clients achieve as a result of receiving these services. We anticipate continuing to train our subgrantees on using data to improve and plan their programs, as well as to use their data convincingly in grant proposals and requests for funding to policy makers. The CJCC will also make use of the data in our applications for federal funding and our discussions with policy-makers in Georgia about the important contribution of victims assistance programs to the criminal justice system.

CJCC/SAC staff intend to share the lessons learned from this project with presentations at the JRSA Conference and the American Evaluation Association Conference in fall 2008. In addition, we are beginning discussions with the Department of Community Affairs, which also funds domestic violence shelters, to use the same approach to collecting performance measurement data. Our subgrantees have indicated strongly to their other major state government funding source, the Department of Human Resources, that they would like to see the performance measures we have developed together also be adopted by that agency as well.

Finally, we are also planning to continue this work with our other major category of grant recipients, our multi-jurisdictional drug task forces (MJTFs) funded by the Byrne-JAG grant.